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NEWS AND INFORMATION from the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

YMCA KICKS-OFF ANNUAL INVEST IN YOUTH APPEAL

Each year the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA goes to the community to seek donations for its scholarship and financial aid program through its Invest in Youth Appeal. The Board of Directors with other community volunteers is attempting to raise \$200,000 this year.

Nick Edson, Y Board Chairperson and Cherryland Electrical Cooperative, and Kim Pontius, Y Board Member and Traverse Area Association of REALTORS[®], will serve as co-chairpersons for the Appeal.

"The members of the YMCA Board of Directors each year goes to the community for donations for our Invest In Youth program," said Edson. "It is in keeping with our 'No One Denied' policy so that everyone can fully participate in our YMCA programs regardless of financial need. Our financial assistance requests have risen 38% over 2008 already through August this year. It's no surprise that this year has been a difficult one for many people, and we're helping as much as we can."

"Particularly in the current economy, more children and families are requesting scholarship support to participate in YMCA program," according to Pontius. "We are seeking people to really 'invest in youth' not only for the sake of children and families in our area but also to build a strong community."

Other members of the Invest in Youth Appeal team include: Denny Bogard, Al Bonney, Mike Casuscelli, Peter Doren, Keely Eagle, Susanne Edson, Bill Erickson, Jill Fenton-Jones, Tim Foley, Dave Gabel, Brett Gourdie, Dan Hofstra, Hank Johnson, Marc Judge, Gary Kaberle, Phil Knapp, Charles Kolbusz, Chris Lambert, Stephanie Long, Greg Luyt, Cathy Meyer-Looze, Konrad Molter, Jeff Mugerian, Scott Myers, Fred Nelson, Homer Nye, Dan Ollar, Tina Piotrowski, Kim Pontius,

Gary Popovits, John Russell, Lynn Schultz, Bill Shoskey, Greg Smith, Bill Stone, Tim Troost, Chris Webb, Rita Whaley, Adam Whitson, Greg Williams, Ron Williamson.

“Our strategy is to contact as many people as possible personally to tell the YMCA Invest in Youth story during October and November,” according to Pontius.

Invest in Youth is a scholarship program at the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA that provides the necessary funding for people to fully participate in YMCA programs regardless of families’ financial circumstances. During good and bad economic times, there are people, from time to time needing just a little financial help, to allow children, parents, and seniors to be a part of YMCA programs. Last year, because of people’s generosity, the YMCA was able to help some 500 families with over \$120,000 in scholarship assistance. In addition to this, the YMCA assists families of military personnel as recognition for their service to our country. The YMCA helped 161 military families with these scholarships.

Interested people can find a donation form on the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA website at www.gtbayymca.org or by calling 231-933-9622. The YMCA website has more information on Invest in Youth or any of the Y’s more than 65 programs.